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Pastor's Conf. to 'encourage discouraged'

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

"Encouraging the Discouraged," based on Heb. 3:13a and Heb. 10:25, is the theme of the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference to be held October 30 in the sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

"I am excited about the first Pastor's Conference of the new millennium. I believe God will renew and refresh us all as pastors through the preaching of the Word, the inspiration of music, and fellowship with other pastors," said Richard Johnson, Mississippi Pastor's Conference president and former pastor of Tate Church, Corinth.

The afternoon session will begin at 1:30 p.m. with welcome and prayer by Johnson, and conclude at 4:30 p.m. with the benediction by Daryl Oster, pastor of Castlewoods Church, Brandon, and president-elect of the Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference.

The evening session will be opened by Johnson at 6:30 p.m., and will adjourn at 9:30 p.m. with the benediction by Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.

Among the speakers at the conference and their program times:

• Kenny Digby, director of missions for Alcorn Association in Corinth, at 1:50 p.m.

• Barry Clingan, pastor of Crossgates Church, Brandon, at 2:40 p.m.

• Bartholomew Orr, pastor of Brown Church, Southaven, at 3:50 p.m.

• Steve Gaines, pastor of First Church, Gardendale, Ala., at 6:45 p.m.

• Ike Reighard, pastor of North Star Church, Kennesaw, Ga., at 7:30 p.m.

• Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Church, Woodstock, Ga., at 8:50 p.m.

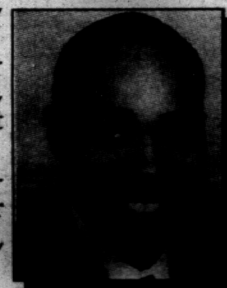
Yo Yo Collins of Salina, Okla., will present special music and his testimony at 8:10 p.m. Collins was injured in a 1977 diving accident and is a quadriplegic.

Ricky and Dena Pike will provide special music during the evening session at 6:35 p.m. and 7:20 p.m. The Pikes have performed with contemporary Christian artists Jonathan Pierce, Scott Kippayne, Michael English, and Natalie Grant, and have released their first album, *The Journey*.

The Pastor's Conference is held prior to the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, which will begin this year at First



Johnson



Orr



Oster



Reighard

Church, Jackson, on the morning of October 31 and conclude shortly before noon on November 1.

Due to ongoing major construction in the parking lots of First Church, Pastor's Conference attendees are strongly encouraged to park in the secured area at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds just off Jefferson Street, and take the shuttle service to the conference.

Conference attendees should enter at gate number three at the southwest corner of the fairgrounds, across from the U.S. Naval Reserve headquarters.

2000 MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST PASTOR'S CONFERENCE

October 30, 2000
First Church, Jackson

AFTERNOON SESSION

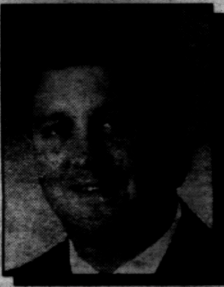
1:30 p.m. Welcome	Richard Johnson
1:35 p.m. Celebration in Song	
1:50 p.m. Message	Kenny Digby
2:30 p.m. Celebration in Song	
2:40 p.m. Message	Barry Clingan
3:20 p.m. Celebration in Song	
Offering	
Election of Officers	
3:50 p.m. Message	Bartholomew Orr
4:30 p.m. Benediction	Daryl Oster

EVENING SESSION

6:30 p.m. Welcome	Richard Johnson
6:35 p.m. Music	Ricky & Dena Pike
6:45 p.m. Message	Steve Gaines
7:20 p.m. Music	Ricky & Dena Pike
7:30 p.m. Message	Ike Reighard
8:10 p.m. Music/testimony	Yo Yo Collins
8:40 p.m. Offering	
8:50 p.m. Message	Johnny Hunt
9:30 p.m. Benediction	Jim Futral



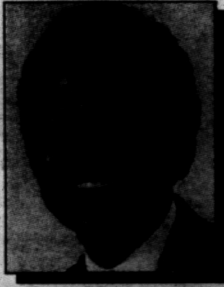
Clingan



Gaines



Collins



Hunt

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Miss. CP remains strong

Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) gifts to the work of the Lord for the month of September made a strong showing to follow up a month during which an all-time record was almost eclipsed, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson. The September 2000 CP total was \$2,415,190, or 17.08% less than the \$2,912,792 given in the month of August 2000, and 9.33% less than the \$2,663,701 given in the same period last year. The August 2000 total was the second-highest in Mississippi CP history, behind only January 1997 at \$2,922,651. Gifts for the current fiscal year are \$885,268, or 4.22% ahead of last year's record pace. CP gifts to date in the current fiscal year, which runs through December, are \$21,847,536. The 2000 CP budget as set by messengers to the 1999 Mississippi Baptist Convention is \$28,083,349.

Mississippi CP helps fund such activities as the Girls in Action (GA) mother/daughter weekend at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on October 13-14; the Outreach Strategy Tour at numerous locations around the state during the month of October; and the African-American Church Leadership Institute at Gateway Church, Lumberton, on October 27.

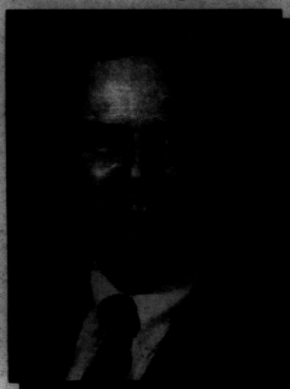
SBC CP continues rise

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — September receipts of the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program were up an impressive 13.7% compared to the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee. In CP gifts, a total of \$15,447,337.56 was received in September to support Southern Baptist missions and ministries globally and across North America, compared to \$13,586,054.23 in September 1999.

For the fiscal year to date, October 1999 through September 2000, CP giving is 6.13% ahead of the same period a year ago, \$178,298,879.52 as compared to \$167,996,385.28. In designated giving during September 2000, the total of \$3,098,039.44 was 30.17% above the September 1999 total of \$2,380,033.72. For the fiscal year to date, designated giving remains 7.6% ahead of last year's pace, \$163,269,485.05 as compared to \$151,737,197.05.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date receipts of \$178,298,879.52 are \$18,715,136.52 above the budgeted \$159,583,743. The monthly receipts showed \$15,447,337.56 received, more than 116% of the budgeted amount of \$13,298,645.25.

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Entertainment media: targeting children

For the parents of American teenagers, the recent Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report that exposed Hollywood's marketing of R-rated movies to children should come as no surprise.

The FTC report found that of the 44 R-rated movies their investigators chose to research, 80% had marketing plans aimed at children under 17. Investigators also discovered that marketers for 28 of the 44 selected films had explicit, documentable statements that they were targeting children under 17 as the audience for their films.

So unimpressed with the gravity of the report were the Hollywood kingpins, that they thumbed their noses at an invitation to explain their trade to Congressmen who organized hearings on the report. They believe they are answerable to no one.

The Hollywood marketers are good at their trade. They advertise on television shows that are known to have high viewership among children. Trendy teen magazines are frequently filled with eye-catching ads offering peeks at the sex and violence contained within a film.

Everywhere in the media are web site addresses where children can find out more than they need to know about just-released films.

One wonders why, if children under 17 cannot enter an R-rated movie (or at least must be accompanied by a parent or guardian), Hollywood film makers would even be interested in the under-17 crowd.

Having viewed a few trailers for the latest batch of R-rated movies, this writer has concluded the reason must be that the plots of these movies are so juvenile that no adult would pay to see the films.

At the risk of sounding old-fashioned, there was a time when the American movie industry had the ability to uplift humanity and make a great movie at the same time.

Examples include such classics as The Best Years of Our Lives, It's a Wonderful Life, Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, and a host of others.

Fast forward to last year's Academy Awards, where the film that won Best Picture — American Beauty — was a sordid tale of dysfunctional family life, meaningless sex and drug use, and disrespect for the traditional roles of family members.

To be fair, there are people in Hollywood who are making at least a passing effort to create films worth going to see.

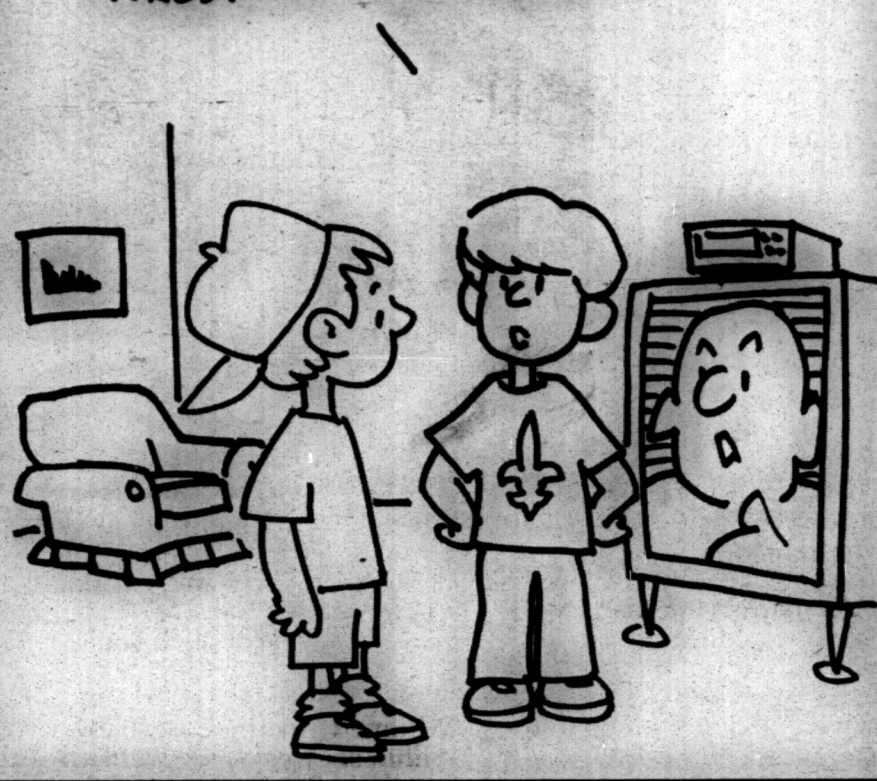
The bottom line, however, is that Hollywood is not doing a very good

job of policing itself. Too many movie advertisements feature gun-toting tough guys and seductively-posed women. All too often, the movies depicted in those appealing ads contain themes inappropriate not only for children but for adults as well.

While we struggle to protect the minds of our children, we should also be protecting our own minds against such pollution.

What can we do? Be well-informed about the choices we make regarding movies, not only for our children but for ourselves.

"NO BRANDON, IT'S THE
OTHER WAY AROUND —
PREACHING IS REAL AND
WRESTLING IS FAKE."



Movie making is a capitalistic enterprise. If a movie turns out to be a money-losing flop, it's a reputation-buster in a field where reputation for big box office is everything. Like most businesses, Hollywood doesn't like to revisit its business failures.

Whether we realize it or not, Christians have a lot of purchasing power. Other groups use their purchasing power to change society.

Isn't it about time Christians realized they can do the same?

Every year in October the Southern Baptist Convention emphasizes World Hunger Sunday and Poverty Awareness Sunday. This year, Hunger Awareness Sunday fell on October 8 and Poverty Awareness Sunday will be observed on October 15.

I expect the same phrase to be uttered throughout the convention: "Is it that time again?" (with undue and unattractive emphasis on "again.")

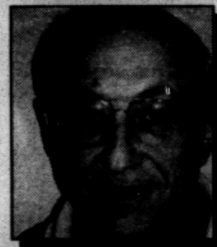
Doubtless, some will add that the government is responsible for seeing after those who are on the poverty rolls or need food. However, historical evidence shows conclusively that as government funding and control increase, the numbers of people receiving government services increase and the local involvement of churches in ministering to the poor and hungry decreases.

One has to realize that there is one thing that the government agency cannot and will never do — minister compassionately in the name of Christ.

For the Christian community to have any hope of penetrating a culture of lost people with the Gospel, churches and individual believers must resist and reverse the forces of secularization in our society.

The failure to do so over the past fifty years has been one of

GUEST OPINION:



*Is it that
time again?*

By Cary F. Worthington, pastor
West Laurel Church, Laurel

the main factors in the weakening of the church. The church has been thus relegated to the intellectual and political fringes of society and the message of Christ has not been effectively proclaimed.

The church has failed to understand that a marginalized church is a powerless church.

If the church, through government usurpation, has become irrelevant to the problems peo-



"He...gave the loaves." Mark 6:41

POVERTY AWARENESS SUNDAY
October 15

ple face on a daily basis, the church has truly lost its power to influence culture. We are no longer the salt and light we were instructed to be.

All is not lost, however. The taxpayers' demand for downsizing government programs is indicative that the public is

becoming aware that such programs do not work. This has brought a call from some in political circles for a return, on

both state and federal levels, to faith-based programs administered by churches and church-related ministries.

This call presents an opportunity for those of us who realize the main problem is not hunger but the need for Christ. We have the opportunity to minister to Christ and to others in his name (Matt. 25:35-40).

By stepping through the door of opportunity that is now before us, the church can once more maximize its evangelistic outreach by linking itself to specific community needs. A Christian ethic will be returned to the individual communities, and alternatives provided to organizations that undermine Biblical values.

The local church can become a beachhead for culturally sensitive ministries and — best of all — Christ will be glorified.

We can sit back and let the government do it, but we should realize that because they are intrinsically secular and without Christ, they will be doomed to failure. Those without Christ will continue to look at the church and say, "They don't care," and the cause of Christ will continue to be diminished.

Will this be our last opportunity? Will the cause of Christ be renewed? Let us once again be the salt and light Jesus commands us to be. See to it that you give meat to eat in Jesus' Name.

Missionaries recount various calls to service

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (BP) — Some are newly married and others are recently retired. Some are middle-aged with grown children just leaving the nest, while others are expecting babies soon.

One is an engineer. Another is an optometrist. Yet another was an oil company executive. Some, of course, are straight out of seminary and others have been serving Southern Baptist churches for several years.

They hail from a variety of states and an array of colleges and universities.

Their skin colors range from white to brown to black.

Yet all 40 of Southern Baptists' newest international missionaries appointed Sept. 26 in special services in

Evansville, Ind., have one thing in common: Somehow, some way, God called them to take the good news of salvation overseas.

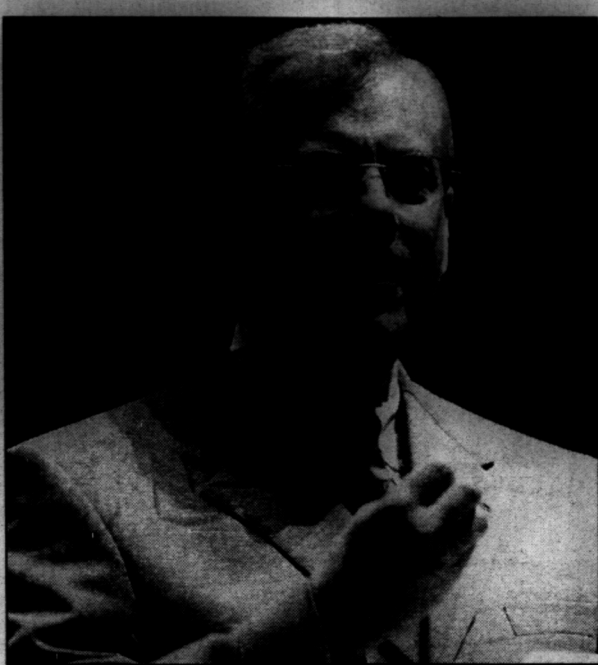
Even this commonality is marked by wide variations. How God called each of them to become an international missionary is as distinctive and unique as are their backgrounds and personalities.

For some, it was traditional missions education programs such as GAs, RAs, and Acteens.

"Through Sunbeams, GAs, and YWA, God planted a great love for missions in my heart," missionary appointee Nan Williams said in her appointment service testimony.

For many others, it was an opportunity to go overseas on a volunteer mission trip.

"After 34 years of devotion to children, church, and careers, we prayed about our purposeless future," said another appointee, who is going to a restricted country.



GOD HAS A PLAN — International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin, a native Mississippian, told 41 new missionaries that "before you were born, God had a plan and purpose for you ... and called you to the nations." (BP photo by Sandy King)

Chimed in her husband: "Within six weeks, we were on a medical mission trip to Chile. We knew this was the direction of our future. Five trips and five years later, we left 33 years of optometry to begin our International Service Corps term. [As associate missionaries now], we will continue our present work in Central and Southern Asia."

For still others, it was an opportunity that occurred when they read about international missions somewhere.

"My call to missions came while studying a Sunday School unit on international missions, when God awakened my heart to 1.7 billion who have never heard that Jesus Christ is the only Savior," said one new appointee who will serve in a restricted-access country.

For one, it was a secretarial assignment to transcribe a seminary president's missions sermon.

"While my husband, Jason, was in seminary, I had the opportunity to serve as secretary to Dr. Gray Allison, founder of Mid-America Baptist Seminary," said Kelley Hill, new missionary to the Bemba people in Zambia. "A great blessing of my job was to transcribe Dr. Gray's sermons. Last October, I transcribed a sermon in which, literally as I typed, God revealed to me that he was calling me to overseas missions."

Whatever the circumstance, the intensity of the call to international missions motivated the new missionaries to sell their businesses, their homes, their cars, their boats, and most of their material possessions and to even set aside retirement plans to follow God wherever he was leading.

Today the "wherever" is a wide array of global locations not thought possible a decade or so ago.

"You probably had no idea [your calls] would lead to places like China, Bosnia, Kazakhstan, Zambia, Russia, or Chile," International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin told the 40 new appointees during the appointment service, which was attended by some 1,300 people from Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky.

"Regardless of the circumstances and events and people God used to influence you, the Bible indicates that it was all intentional in God's plan and providence," he said. "It is amazing to realize that, like Jeremiah, before you were born, God had a plan and purpose for you, consecrated you and called you to the nations."

"He had his hand on you and has skillfully and divinely manipulated the events and influences of your life to call you to the nations at this particular time."

In his introductory remarks, Avery Willis, IMB senior vice president for overseas operations, told the appointees, "We are seeing one of the greatest

moves of God in the history of the world today."

As an example, he described how — despite persecution and extreme difficulties — the number of Christians in China has grown from an estimated 1 million in 1950 to perhaps as many as 75 million today.

He said one Chinese official recently told him that "25,000 people a day are coming to Christ in China."

Willis added, "Although great growth is occurring there, many, many lost people live in China today, too."

The size of the Chinese population that does not know Christ is nearly four times that of the total U.S. population today, he said.

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Yugoslavs ask for prayer

WASHINGTON (BP) — Baptists in Yugoslavia have asked for urgent prayers for their country caught in the grip of political upheaval after President Slobodan Milosevic was driven from office by massive protests in favor of new president Vojislav Kostunica.

Avram Dega, general secretary of the Union of Baptist Churches in Serbia, in a communication to the Baptist World Alliance, said, "There is very high tension between the regime and the opposition, and it grows."

"This is the beginning and how the things will develop I don't know," Dega said. "I do know that the most effective method for us to be a part of the solution of these crises is our joined prayers."

Dega urged prayer for:

- a peaceful solution to solve the electoral crises.
- that truth and democracy will prevail.
- that people and all political leaders and parties, the army, and the police will act in the spirit of tolerance and truth to guard the people against any danger of conflicts and bloodshed.

The country has been gripped by political intrigue and unrest since Milosevic called for early elections and was challenged by Kostunica. Reports of ballot fraud and other voting irregularities began to crop up immediately after Milosevic took a narrow lead and declared himself the winner.

Looking back

10 years ago

First Church, Brookhaven, sends 34 members on mission to Nariz, Mexico, for a week of building houses, completing a medical clinic, and installing recreational equipment at a local church. The teams' four-person cooking crew prepares three meals a day without electricity or running water.

20 years ago

Trustees of Baptist-affiliated Clarke College in Newton unanimously accept the results of a study by the Southern Baptist Education Commission and plan to proceed on a recommendation that the two-year college seek a merger with Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton.

50 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Education Commission recommends the closing of Mississippi Woman's College in Hattiesburg "in view of the failure of Mississippi Baptists to support Mississippi Woman's College through patronage or endowment."

IT'S OFFICIAL — Tennessee natives Stan and Pam Waffler were among 41 new missionaries receiving certificates recognizing their appointment from International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin during a Sept. 26 appointment service in Evansville, Ind. They will serve in eastern Africa. (BP photo by Sandy King)

Ministers' wives to meet October 30

The annual conference of Mississippi Baptist Ministers' Wives will be held at First Church, Jackson, on October 30 from 1-4:30 p.m.

Program personalities include Neil and Vicki Knierim, co-editors of The Ministers' Family magazine.

The conference will offer inspiration, fellowship, personal growth, information, and support for the minister's wife.

There is no charge for the conference, but the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department (CAPM) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board requests that everyone register in advance. Child care by reservation will be available for preschoolers on a limited basis.

For more information, contact Kay McDonnell at (601) 292-3305 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 305. E-mail: kmc-donnell@mbcb.org.

Lay missions subject of Oct. 30 conf.

"The Difference One Can Make," the Lay Missions Conference and banquet, will be held at First Church, Brandon, on October 30. Special interest conferences will be at 3 p.m. with the missions banquet at 5 p.m.

Harry Lewis, director, Strategic Planning Section of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in Atlanta, will be the keynote speaker.

Special music will be by Luz del Mundo (Light of the World). Interest conferences include agricultural missions, educational missions, volunteers in missions, and construction projects.

Dinner reservations are \$8.50 per person and can be made through the Men's Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. For more information, contact Gail Wood at (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: gwood@mbcb.org.

Missionary parents celebrate anniversary

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The Mississippi Missionary Parents Fellowship (MPF) met September 22-23 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton to mark their five-year anniversary as the pioneer missionary parents group in the Southern Baptist Convention.

It was in Mississippi that the idea of forming such a group first took hold, and speakers at the September 22-23 meeting appealed to the parents to support their missionary children through prayer and the witness of their own lives.

Bill Causey, who retired two years ago from his job as executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, encouraged the parents to maintain a strong base for their missionary children and for missionary parents in other states who are looking to Mississippi for leadership.

"The Missionary Parents Fellowship was born here, but it is now in eight other states. You are the most special group I know anything about in the state of Mississippi," Causey said.

Causey suggested that one of the best ways missionary parents can help their children is to "successfully and happily deal with your own life."

"It was in your home, at your hearth, at your table, that they got the first impression that this is important," he said.

Causey also implored the parents to pray for their children and provide a sense of permanence in their home, making it a place on which missionary children know they can always depend.

"Just as sailors need the North Star, (missionary children) need you," he said.

Terri Willis, associate director for stateside assignments at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) in Richmond, Va., also stressed the importance of missionary parents.

"We rely on you to be an anchor for your children overseas. We at IMB know who puts missionaries of the plane at the airport," she said.

Willis also commended the Mississippi parents for their foresight in establishing the group.

"When people ask how to start a missionary parents fellowship, I ask, 'Would you like to go to the next Mississippi MPF meeting?'" she said.

Lois Henderson, who along with her husband Guy are retired missionaries now living in Clinton, recounted her experiences first as a young mother on the mission field and now as a missionary parent.

The Hendersons' daughter Melinda and her family serve in Russia.

The missionary parents were also treated to a special anniversary history of MPF, with a computerized PowerPoint presentation by Jimmy and Earline Walker.

The Walker's daughter Beth and her family serve in Guatemala. Jimmy Walker is pastor of Tiplersville Church, Tiplersville.

Other speakers at the two-day meeting were Bill Bullington, an IMB employee and missionary parent; and Al and Beth Bailey,

IMB missionaries to Guatemala.

The next MPF meeting is scheduled for January 26-27 during the Annual Missions Celebration at Country Woods Church, Jackson. The group will also hold its spring retreat on April 20-21, and its fall retreat on September 21-22.

For more information on MPF, contact Kathy Burns at the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3324 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 324. E-mail: kburns@mbcb.org.



MISSIONARY PARENTS — Officers for the Mississippi Missionary Parents Fellowship include (from left) Erlene Walker, Tiplersville, treasurer; Glenda Braswell, Boyle, president; Ruth Smith, Jackson, secretary; Gerald Hart, Brookhaven, vice president/program chairman; and Mary and George Taylor, Hattiesburg, e-mail program coordinators. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Groups to hold meetings during MBC

Following is a partial list of groups that will be holding meetings during the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting, scheduled for October 31-November 1 at First Church, Jackson. For more information, contact the person listed for each meeting.

Monday, October 30

- Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association fall luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Ridgecrest Church, Madison. \$12.00 per person. Contact Lewis Harrell, First Church, Indianola, at (662) 887-2241.

Tuesday, October 31

- Annuitants breakfast, 7:30 a.m., First Church, Jackson. Contact Robin Nichols, (601) 292-3226 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 226. E-mail: rnichols@mbcb.org.

- Mississippi College Christian Service alumni continental breakfast, 7:30 a.m., First Church, Jackson, Fellowship Hall West. Contact Lance Clay, director of Alumni Affairs, at (601) 925-3000. E-mail: clay@mc.edu.

- Mississippi College School of Nursing, in conjunction with Baptist Health Systems, Inc., will offer a Health Fair from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on the fourth floor of First Church, Jackson. Total cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, glaucoma, hearing, and hemoglobin screenings will be provided at no charge. Flu shots will cost \$6.

- Southwestern Seminary alumni luncheon, 11:45 a.m., Calvary Church, Jackson. \$8.00 per person. Contact David Wills or Linda Reeves, (601) 292-3298 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 298. E-mail: dwills@mbcb.org.

- Mid-America Seminary alumni luncheon, noon, Denney's Restaurant, 330 Greymont Ave., Jackson. \$12.50 per person. No reservations necessary. Contact David Sapp, (662) 473-4447.

- New Orleans Seminary alumni luncheon, noon, First Church, Jackson. \$10.00 per person. Contact Ben James at (662) 326-3928 or NOBTS Alumni office at (504) 282-4455, ext. 3291.

- Chaplains fall banquet, 4:45 p.m., Baptist Building Skyroom, Jackson. \$8.50 per person if non-member. Contact Elaine Smith (601) 292-3361 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 361. E-mail: esmith@mbcb.org.

- Blue Mountain College ministerial alumni association dinner, 5:30 p.m., Galloway United Methodist Church, Jackson. Tickets available at door or at the Blue Mountain College booth. Contact Blue Mountain College Alumni Office at (662) 685-4771.

Wednesday, November 1

- Bivocational Ministers Fellowship breakfast, 7:00 a.m., Baptist Building Chapel, Jackson. Contact Matt Buckles (601) 292-3308 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 308. E-mail: mbuckles@mbcb.org.

Movie theater novel setting for Bible study

CULLMAN, Ala. (BP) — What do popcorn, a movie theater, and a teenage girl questioning her faith in God have in common with a Sunday morning worship service in Cullman, Ala.?

They were all key ingredients in Northside Church's unique launching of an eight-week Bible study explaining the importance of a Christian worldview.

Paul Hicks, pastor of the Cullman, Ala., church came up with the idea of holding the September worship service in the movie theater on the town square to stir interest in the "How Now Shall We Live" study.

Produced by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, the study includes a workbook, leader guide, videos, and a trade book co-authored by Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey.

"When I first read the [trade] book by Colson, I just consumed it," Hicks said. "The message is one we need. Colson expresses in such a clear way the battle Christians face is not about abortion, gambling, euthanasia. Those are surface issues. The heart of the battle is finding a Christian worldview."

In their book, Colson, former presidential aide to Richard Nixon and founder of the international ministry Prison Fellowship, and Pearcey, a fellow at the Discovery Institute's Center for Renewal for Science and Culture, say competing worldviews are the bases for today's spiritual battles.



WORSHIP SERVICE IN A THEATER — Sisters Haley and Whitley Reid (center, right), of Northside Baptist Church, Cullman, Ala., ask actress Caley Cheney for her autograph following the theater viewing of 'Katy's Metaphysical Adventure.' Caley plays Katy in the made-for-TV video. (BP photo by Sue Ann Miller)

Christians must exercise a Christian worldview in the face of the prevailing secular worldview, Colson said in an earlier interview. "They need to get serious about seeing the world the way God sees it."

At the local theater, Hicks showed "Katy's Metaphysical Adventure," a made-for-TV movie during Northside's Sunday morning service. Used for both outreach and the Bible study's introduction, the video introduces 15-year-old Katy who has encountered ideas

that contradict the faith of her family.

LifeWay editor Dale McCleskey, who co-authored the project's adult leader and study guides, said, "The real battleground is the battleground of ideas. Helping believers achieve a biblical worldview and understand Christianity as a total life system is the purpose behind this study."

Katy's Metaphysical Adventure is based on a story that appears in Colson's book, and LifeWay is giving churches permission to air the movie on cable television or local channels. Northside paid to have it broadcast four times on a local cable channel in Cullman — "twice during prime time and twice off prime time," Hicks said.

In addition to bags of popcorn and sodas, Northside church members and guests attending the special video showing were given another treat. The actress who played Katy, Caley Cheney of Franklin, Tenn., attended the showing and performed a song. LifeWay representatives also were on hand, Hicks said.

While Hicks is pleased with the response from the congregation, he's more thrilled about the profession of faith made at the end of the service by a 9-year-old boy.

Keathley to be student dean at NOBTS

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary President Chuck Kelley has announced the appointment of Kenneth Keathley as the new dean of students.

Keathley, former assistant professor of theology and philosophy and director of the doctor of ministry program at Midwestern Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., has served a variety of pastoral positions, including churches in Missouri and Raleigh, N.C., bringing a pastor's heart to the dean of student's position. "I see the dean of students as the most pastoral of the administrative positions," Keathley said, explaining his approach to the position.

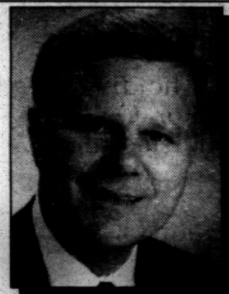
Keathley received both his doctor of philosophy and master of divinity degrees from Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., in 2000 and 1995, respectively. He also earned a master of natural sciences degree in mathematics from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau in 1993 and a bachelor of arts degree in Bible from Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga in 1980.

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

In only a few days, Mississippi Baptists from across the state will gather in Jackson for their annual convention. While it happens only once a year, it is a significant happening. I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend. Many of you will come as messengers, but even though you may not be an elected messenger from your church, you are welcome to attend!

The convention will be only two days, October 31-November 1, 2000, but the activities which take place around the convention can be a source of encouragement and enrichment. On Monday, October 30, the Pastor's Conference, the Ministers' Wives Conference, and the Lay Missions Conference will all be taking place, which many of you, if at all possible, will want to attend. The Order of Business committee of the convention has prayed and worked diligently to put together the best convention program they possibly can. Our convention officers have been faithful in their preparation and will guide us through the deliberations hour by hour.

Whether you will be able to attend or not you can, right now, take time to pray and ask God to guide us in everything that is done and the manner in which it is done. I hope that you will make your plans to come. In recent days, as I would see



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

folks across the state at various associational meetings, I would say to individuals, "I look forward to seeing you at the convention!" One pastor replied to me, "I'll be there unless something just beyond my control keeps me from attending. I have not missed a convention in thirty something years!" To that same statement, another man said, "No, I probably won't be there. I haven't been to the convention in several years." I said, "Well, make plans to come this year!" "I don't know," he said, "I'll think about it."

Why would a person want to come to the convention?

• **To receive a blessing.** The convention deals with business, but that is only a part of the story, for you see - this business is God's business! It is Heavenly business! Every session is anchored to receiving and experiencing a Word from God; a touch from the Holy Spirit; a lift from the Lord. I have been to conventions where every session just seemed to be pulsating with the presence of God. I have been to other conventions that were on the dull and sometimes dry side. But, I have never been

to a convention where I didn't find a moment of blessing from the Lord. God may have something special just for you and you do not want to miss it!

• **You can be a blessing.** In your own local congregations there is something wonderful about the fellowship of God's people. When you bring Baptists together from all across the state for a feast of spiritual fellowship, it is something glorious! Many of you need no encouragement at all to spend some time in the exhibit area and bookstore. Others of you may need to find your way to those places not just to visit, browse, and buy, but to touch someone else's life. It is not uncommon for any of us to fall into the thought trap of, "What do I get?" rather than considering, "What can I give?"

Before the sessions and after, in gatherings in the halls, and meetings at restaurants, God uses people to encourage one another to share wisdom and to lift burdens. You can be a blessing to someone else - you will see!

• **You can determine a blessing.** While in convention we will be making decisions

and as we do we'll be looking at the way Mississippi Baptists touch a state, a nation, and a world with Jesus' love. Our budget, which will for the first time exceed \$30 million, is from beginning to end a mission budget. Our elected leaders and trustees of institutions and agencies will be voted on to lead us in continuing to fulfill the mission of Jesus.

The convention is important and you are important to the convention!

Special room rates for persons attending the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting on October 31-November 1 have been negotiated with the following hotels and motels. Be sure to ask for the Mississippi Baptist Convention rate.

Clarion (601) 969-2141	\$59 single
400 Greymont Avenue	\$69 double
Edison Walthall (601) 948-6161	\$69 single
225 E. Capitol	\$79 double
Hampton Inn (601) 352-1700	\$69 single, double
320 Greymont Avenue	\$85 suite
Holiday Inn Express (601) 948-4466	\$69.95 two king beds
310 Greymont Street	continental breakfast buffet
Microtel Inn (601) 352-3232	\$60 double
614 Monroe Street	\$65 suite
	complimentary breakfast
Red Root Inn Coliseum (601) 969-5006	\$41.99 single
1-55 at High Street	\$46.99 double
	\$51.99 business king

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Mt. Moriah Church, Lincoln County, will have its annual Old Fashioned Day observance on Oct. 21 and 22. Activities on Saturday will include carnival, 3-6 p.m.; meal at church, 6-7 p.m.; and gospel singing featuring Midnight Cry, 7-8:30 p.m. Sunday activities are Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship service, 11 a.m. with Darnell Archie, pastor of First Church, Bude, as guest speaker, meal in fellowship, and gospel singing from 1:30-3 p.m. For more information, call (601) 833-8858 or 835-2758.

Gore Springs Church, Grenada County, will celebrate its 45th birthday on Oct. 22. Worship service will begin at 10:30 a.m. with lunch served at the noon. Special musical program is planned for the afternoon at 1:30 p.m. Special guests are Rick Tutor, leading the music, and Everette Martin, former pastor, speaker.



Acteens of North Carrollton Church, Carrollton



Center Ridge Church, Yazoo City, held its GA and RA Recognition Service on Aug. 20. Pictured are Olivia Johnston, Virginia Smith, Steven Peeples, Rob Cohea, Christopher Smith, and Isaac Posey. Steven Peeples and Christopher Smith received recognition for perfect attendance. The directors are Elizabeth and Mike Blanton. Mike Sutton is pastor.

Youth and adults from New Hope Church, Monticello, returned on Aug. 5 from a ten day mission trip in Prescott, Ontario, Canada. While there they led Vacation Bible School in the campground and also led night worship services at Shanliwood Church in Prescott. The group was teamed with Bayside Church of Chesapeake Beach, Maryland, who led VBS at Shanliwood Church. Pictured (kneeling) are Jeremy Douglas, Crystal Carr, Misty Ratcliff, Brandi Beeson, Kasia Crider, Kaci Williams, Christi Autrey, Adam Tanksley, Salena Williams, and David Speights; (standing) Linda Monroe, Drury Lambert, Erica Douglas, Thomas Dequeant, Linda Lambert, Kris Williams, Jarrod Lambert, Craig Borgstede, Will Vance, Matt Pevey, Dale Stephens, Stephanie Stephens, Kyle Williams, Kyle Crider, David Williams, Phillip Speights, Laurie King, and Brian Neal. Not pictured: Alberto Rivera and Joshua Stephens.

Dawn Barham, music director at MSMS. Steve Huber is pastor of Longview Church.

North Carrollton Church, Carrollton, held a recognition service for its Mission Friends, GAs, Acteens, and RAs on Sept. 3. Mission Friends were Molly Davis, Payton Clanton,

and Maggie Lloyd. The leaders are Joan Prewitt and Jennifer Hodges.

Acteens (pictured) were JoAnna Cummings, leader; Tricia Cummins, attendants, Kaitlin and Naron Yates; Emily Irwin, attendants, Maggie Lloyd and Brandon Hooks; Emily Floyd, attendants, Brittany Stephenson and Coty Williams.



RA's of North Carrollton Church, Carrollton

RA's (pictured) were Daniel Hooks, Matt Davis, Brandon Hooks, Naron Yates, Coty Williams, James Maxie, Brooks Irwin, and Josh Maxie. RA leaders are Henry Allen Dunn and Kevin Hooks.

GAs were Lauren Goss, Julia Rivers McClellan, Jade Wrenn, Morgan Clark, Kaitlin Yates, Britny Hooks, Brittany Stephenson, Brittany Martin, and Kristen Suggs. Leaders are Rhonda Goodwin and Margaret Hargrove.



Youth and adults of New Hope Church, Monticello

Revival results

South McComb, McComb: Sept. 17-20; two professions of faith; one for missions; Don Taylor, Conehatta, evangelist; Steve Bishop, Summit, music; Ted C. Bowlin, pastor.

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Michael's Watch



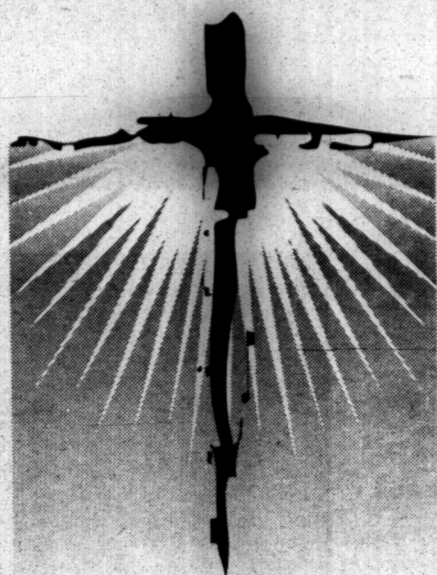
But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said,

"The Lord rebuke you." - Jude 1:9

Michael's Watch is a support group whose sole purpose and mission is to offer emotional, mental, and spiritual support for those whose lives have been affected by family members or loved ones involved in the homosexual lifestyle.

Michael's Watch Group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month at First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Additional information may be obtained by calling **First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi** at (662) 773-6246.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

Partnership Missions

FALL QUARTER 2000

VOL. II, NO. III



♦ PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS DEPARTMENT ♦ P.O. Box 530, JACKSON, Ms 39205-0530 ♦ PHONE (601) 292-3398 ♦ FAX (601) 292-3390 ♦ E-MAIL PHARRELL@MBCB.ORG

"Silver hair" key to unlocking hearts

By Tim Nicholas
Staff Writer

PURPOSE:
TO PROVIDE AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR
VOLUNTEERS
TO USE THEIR SKILLS
TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST
THROUGH MISSION
PARTNERSHIPS.

A group of Mississippi Baptists, on a mission trip to Ukraine this summer, was awaiting a good dinner to be followed by an opportunity to witness for Jesus Christ.

They had spent the earlier part of the day mixing and pouring concrete for a church at San Jeyka. That evening, they were to participate in a Gospel supper.

Gospel suppers are an evangelistic tool used in Ukraine. Christians invite their non-Christian neighbors to a dinner that is provided by funds from the volunteers. A Gospel witness and personal testimonies are parts of the evening's discussion.

Suddenly the man of the house walked into the family room and strode up to the interpreter, pointing his finger and speaking stridently. The man then repeated his actions to Bruce Latimer, volunteer

from Starkville, a member of Calvary Church, Starkville.

The interpreter explained, "This man is not a Christian and doesn't want anything about Jesus Christ mentioned. If so, he'll ask you to leave."

Latimer later recounted that although the conversation was limited, he worked on commonalities. Both he and the man have farmed. Both owned cattle. The man had four children; Latimer, had three.

During the conversation, the man's 80-year-old mother, who was a Christian, asked how he got his beautiful silver hair. Latimer said he got it raising his children. Everyone laughed.

Then Latimer saw an opening. "My hair would be gone and I would have failed at raising my children without a dear friend who lives at my house."

Latimer added, "I didn't do anything without consulting him."

"That's strange," said the Ukrainian farmer. "Did you ask



Bruce Latimer (left) of Starkville moves another shovelful of cement as his volunteer group help build a Baptist Church in Ukraine. (Staff photo)

him every day what to do?"

"Yes," replied Latimer. "In fact, I consulted with him before I got up in the morning."

"He was in the bedroom with you?" asked the man.

"Yes."

"Wait a minute, who was this man?"

"Are you sure you want to know?" asked Latimer.

"Yes."

Then Latimer did what he was asked to do. "The man is Jesus Christ. He is here in spirit. He is the head of my house, the director, the leader, and protector of my family."

Said the man, "Tell me the ways he was helpful to raise your family."

Latimer continued to witness into the evening unopposed.

Partnership Missions Celebration



Larry Cox
Int'l Mission Board



Jim Futral
MBCB

First Baptist Church, Jackson
November 10
Baptist Building, November 11

Celebration banquet
Partnership displays
Testimonies
Fieldside coordinator reports
Fellowship
Mission speakers

Banquet cost \$10 - Call (601)292-3398
for reservations



In the partnership with Ukraine, Mississippi Baptists are starting nine new churches. Each new church start has been assigned a "Church Planter." Pictured are six of the nine Church Planters along with Thomas (seated) and June (center) Nolan, partnership fieldside coordinators. Dale Ledbetter (fourth from left) is the resident International Mission Board missionary and Vladimir Shemchishin (first from left) is the senior pastor of the Odessa Oblast. (Staff photo)

"In Honduras, thousands of children had the opportunity to hear the Gospel through medical/dental and construction teams."
—Paul Harrell

On mission — God at work

God is at work in all seven of our mission partnerships and he is inviting hundreds of volunteers to join him in reaching unsaved people with the Gospel.

During the year 2000, new church start teams have traveled to Ukraine. This has resulted in establishing nine church starts and one new established church with a new church building.

In the year 2001 many of these church starts will become new churches. Each group has wonderful testimonies about how God has provided opportunities in the communities to share the Gospel.

In Honduras, thousands of children have the opportunity to hear the Gospel through medical/dental and construction teams working in public schools and community settings. Teams ministering from Tegucigalpa and La Ceiba have noted many adults and youth making commitments to our Lord.

Ministry teams and new church start teams have

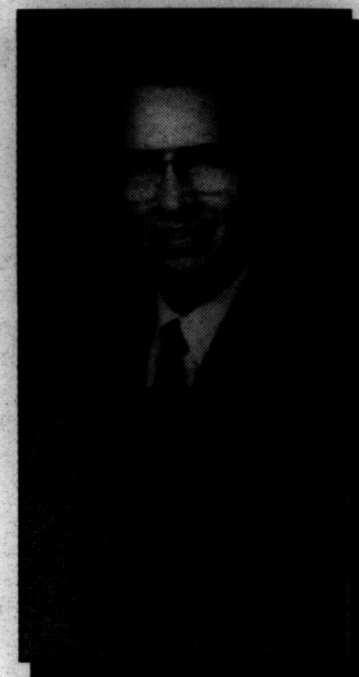
focused on Maryland/Delaware. More than seven hundred volunteers journeyed to Maryland/Delaware this year, and some from there came to minister in Mississippi.

Here is a summary of all Partnership projects and ministries for this year.

Summary Report for 2000:

- 1,590 Volunteers
- 102 Projects
- 23 Houses Constructed
- 3 Church Buildings Constructed
- 28,354 Patients — Medical
- 9,006 Patients — Dental
- 94,232 Prescriptions filled
- 15,297 Bibles Distributed
- 5,620 Professions of Faith
- \$2,159,051 Invested in Mission Ministries

We praise the Lord for such excellent ministries provided by volunteers on mission.



Partnership Missions hires two new consultants

The Partnership Missions Department has two new consultants: Ken Lyle and Clay Moss.

The two have been brought in with special assignments designed to utilize their expertise.

Lyle recently retired as executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England where he served for seven years. Prior to that, he held the same position with Maryland/Delaware.

Lyle's part-time job will be to promote and coordinate partnership work with the Northeast Impact and the Hearts for Boston partnership work.

Clay Moss has served what is now the North American Mission Board in Lewiston, Idaho, as a church planter. More recently he served the International

Mission Board's (IMB) International Service Corps in Malawi with a sports ministry. He also served the IMB in Romania for three years as national volunteer coordinator.

Moss remains on IMB missionary status, on special assignment. He will mobilize and coordinate the volunteer efforts for unreached people groups.

These people groups are in what is called World A, which primarily encompasses North Africa and Central and East Asia.

Moss will be conducting orientation seminars and work as liaison between IMB personnel and volunteer teams.

Moss said the work could be something as simple as handing out flyers in a place where 30,000 people live within a

literal stone's throw, or more technical work such as that done by physicians or computer scientists.

Lyle said that in the Northeast, there is nowhere near the biblical frame of reference on which one could begin a conversation. "Up there," he said, "it would be much more building relationships."

Lyle said, "God is working in the Northeast in some very powerful ways. In fact, my experience has been that people, unchurched people, students, are asking more spiritual questions today than they have for years and years. We need to be there with the right answers."

A lot of what goes on in the Northeast will be among smaller churches, said Lyle. In that context, "God is calling his people and people are accepting ministry challenges."

Gift of electrical poles and wires answers prayer

By Paul Harrell
Director, Partnership Missions Dept.

In 1995 the late Mackie Davis led a medical/dental team to San Jose in the Reitoca area of Honduras. This was a small village of about 100 people. Upon arriving, the team discovered that there was no electricity in the village.

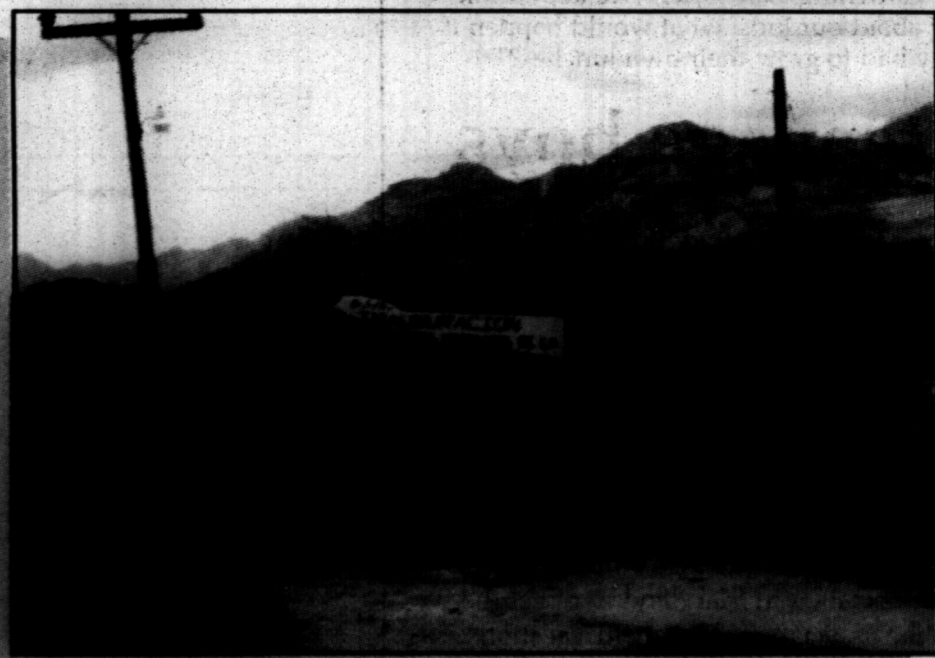
The electrical line ended a mile away on the neighboring mountain and was separated from the village by a sizable river. The little village had requested and pleaded with the government to bring electricity to their side of the mountain, but to no avail.

The volunteers ministered to the health needs and witnessed to the lost as they nurtured the little congregation of the only Baptist church in the community. They held out hope to those people by saying, "We will see what we can do to help you have electricity."

The prayers of the volunteers and the villagers were answered in May 2000 when the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) and the International Mission Board (IMB) made available the funds to purchase poles and electrical wire to bring electricity to the village of San Jose.

On Aug. 18, they invited representatives from the MBCB and the IMB to a day of celebration. Officials for the Reitoca area and the government were present to celebrate with this community of 100 people that all 43 houses now have electricity.

There are only three vehicles in this community. Their favorite modes of transportation are walking and riding horses. This little community was reminded that Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Jesus is truly the light of the world.



Electricity flows for the first time ever through the town of San Jose in Honduras — a symbol of the Mississippi Baptist Partnership and the power of the Gospel. (Staff photo)



PM

Volunteers report great satisfaction

By Tim Nicholas
Staff Writer

"You'll have an opportunity to see people in great need and be able to show God's love in what you're doing for them," said John Cox, an attorney from Greenville, speaking about his volunteer mission work in Honduras.

Cox was one of three Mississippians interviewed concerning their experiences in Mississippi Partnership Missions.



Jim Burnett

Jim Burnett, pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson, spoke on Maryland/Delaware. Joan Tyler of Collins represented volunteerism in Ukraine.

Cox's understanding of God's work in Partnership Missions began before he put his team together for a trip to Honduras for house building. Mississippi Baptists are building hundreds of homes for Hondurans displaced by flooding following Hurricane Mitch two years ago.

Having trouble getting commitments from potential volunteers, Cox received calls from people in Richland and in Florida who wanted to be a part of his team. "I'd been trying to get my team together, but it was God's team the Lord put together," said Cox.

"The trip was everything and more than I had hoped it would be," said Cox. "It gave me this personal satisfaction of having done something in the name of God and Jesus to let people see God's love through us by rebuilding their homes."

Cox said the appreciation of the people who received the concrete block houses was evident despite language barriers.

"You would have thought you were moving them into the Taj Mahal," said Cox.

Cox said he plans on more mission work. He said, "I hear sermons about the Great Commission, but it is a continuing commission, not something that you satisfy by taking one trip."

Burnett has led his church into a partnership agreement with three other Jackson-area churches to help Harvest Church in Salisbury, Md.

Raymond Road Church has placed a new Maryland church, Summit Trace of Frederick, into their budget.

"The beauty of a partnership is that it is a systematic approach to missions," said Burnett. "This builds significant relationships versus the hit and miss mission trips."

He said, "It's not about a road trip."

Burnett said his church's commitment to missions has had wonderful results. "Giving has increased dramatically," he said.



John Cox

And Burnett believes his people are seeing others in a new light. "Our people involved in missions come back and it spreads. Many are ready to receive Christ," he said. "Church plants and partnerships are wonderful tools for the harvest."

Burnett said, "If we take the risk to travel the new avenues God is opening, we'll be effective for the Kingdom."

Quoting the verse, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," Burnett added, "You don't know that until you do it. Your world view will change. You begin to see how big your God is."

Joan Tyler, a homemaker from Collins, has been to Honduras and to Ukraine on mission trips, in addition to Jamaica and Zimbabwe.

In Ukraine last year, she led a women's conference in a small town outside of Belgorod Dnestro. "They wanted things about the family, home, and children," said Tyler. In addition to giving her testimony,

she participated in a question and answer time.

"They asked me everything from personal questions about myself and children to 'Is it all right to wear jewelry?' to 'Explain predestination and election.'"

Tyler returned to Ukraine last May, this time going to Veleka Mehalovka to aid in church planting.

Tyler's team visited a town about 30 minutes away where 14 people had been keeping a church going. The minister there was "so precious—when he would pray, he would weep and weep," said Tyler.



Joan Tyler

"This trip moved me one step further in being able to depend on God and to believe he can do what we've asked him to do," she said.

When considering volunteer mission work, Tyler said that most people operate on a level of "Can I?" or "Could I do it?" and usually find reasons not to.

"The way it works for me is God puts an interest there and he tells us all to go and be involved in missions, praying, giving, going here or to a foreign country," said Tyler. Then she asks, "Is there any reason I cannot or should not go?"

Tyler said that one thing she saw particularly impressed her. A hospital anesthesiologist told her that his hospital did not have enough money to feed patients so the staff planted 200 acres in wheat and bought a bread-making machine. They raised chickens and cows for milk and cottage cheese. They got bees for honey. Thus, the staff provided the necessary food.

At a school, the same system was in place. Each student had his or her own hoe for gardening. Said Tyler, "We kept thinking about our kids: what would happen if they had to grow their own lunches?"

"This trip moved me one step further in being able to depend on God and to believe he can do what we've asked him to do."

—Joan Tyler

Karate black belt wows group of teenage boys

By Tim Nicholas
Staff Writer

A black belt karate instructor wowed a group of teenage boys in Crawford this summer with a show of physical strength, then told them about the awesome power of the Holy Spirit.

The man was Marshall Coffman, associate pastor of Dunkirk Mission, Dunkirk, Md. He was one of 50 Dunkirk members who traveled to Mississippi to make their contribution toward the Partnership between Mississippi Baptists and Baptists in Maryland and Delaware.

Half of the Dunkirk people worked in Tchula in Holmes County, and half in Crawford in Lowndes County. Both groups conducted Vacation Bible Schools and Backyard Bible Clubs.

Bill Duncan, associational missions director for Golden Triangle Baptist Association which includes Lowndes, Clay, and

Oktibbeha counties, said the Marylanders told him they were made so happy working with the Mississippi children, that their lives would never be the same.

Artesia Church, Artesia, participated in the Crawford project by giving \$1,000 toward food for the week's work, then served the food themselves.

Duncan said the Mississippi group wanted to establish a weekday after school Bible-teaching program at Crawford.

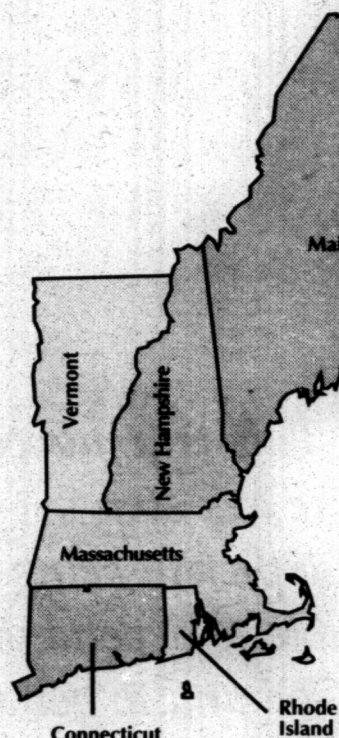
Among the eight teams from Mississippi to travel to Maryland and Delaware was Fairview Church, Columbus. A total of 85 went to the Potomac Association in Maryland to target the five black congregations in the association. They held Vacation Bible Schools, Backyard Bible Clubs, and assisted in revival services at Christian Family Church in La Plata, Md.

This fall Duncan is organizing a group of pastors to go to Maryland and Delaware to preach.



50 million people to reach in NE

By Ken Lyle
Contract Consultant



In early 1999, 11 state convention executive directors, after much prayer and dialogue, said in unison, "In response to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, we accept the enormous challenge of evangelizing the 25% of the population of the United States who live in the Northeast." Impact Northeast was born!

Impact Northeast is a multi-state convention strategy designed to reach the largest unchurched population in the United States. At least 50 million people

who live in the region between Washington, D.C., and Bangor, Maine, do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Part of what it means to be Southern Baptist is a commitment to cooperate in making sure everyone in Alabama, District of Columbia, Maryland/Delaware, Mississippi, New England, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania/South Jersey, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia has decided to have a compelling effect where Southern Baptists' lowest ratio of churches to population is located.

Here's what is intended between now and 2007:

- Double the number of congregations in the N.E. by planting 1,200 new churches.
- Triple the number of ministries to students on the more than 600 college and university campuses in the Northeast.
- Increase the number of healthy churches by at least 10% annually.
- Increase contextualized ministry training by at least 10% annually.

The most important person in this challenging task is you! Your personal involvement will make a life-changing difference for someone in the Northeast. For more information about how you can participate, please dial 1(800)748-1651, ext. 398, or in Jackson 292-3398 and ask for Partnership Missions.

Boston is strategic focus city

By Ken Lyle
Contract Consultant

For Southern Baptist mission leaders, Boston is a strategic focus city. New England's urban hub is also a world class city. It is a microcosm of the global village containing a complex diversity of people groups. It is driven by a rich heritage, which began in 1630 when the Puritans arrived seeking religious freedom and economic well being.

Because at least three out of four people in Boston do not have a personal relationship with God, and because many Bostonians are looking for a full and meaningful life, the followers of Christ who guide the Greater Boston Baptist Association decided it was time to renew our tradition of faith.

Thus, Hearts of Boston began to beat in sync with the missionary heart of God. It is a partnership of Christians committed to spiritual transformation of individuals and communities through the love of Jesus Christ.

Mississippi Baptists have been enlisted by the North American

Mission Board to be a pivotal partner in this quest to touch the hearts of Bostonians with the love of God.

The priorities of Hearts for Boston are: evangelizing the lost, planting new congregations, strengthening existing congregations, challenging college students with the claims of Christ, calling youth to follow Christ, and establishing Christian ministry outposts everywhere possible. Specific strategies are in place to make sure these priorities are accomplished.

It should be obvious that 70 to 80 small Southern Baptist churches will not likely achieve their God-sized goals by themselves. They need help. They need volunteers. They need dollars.

Mississippi Baptists are already helping Hearts for Boston through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Many of us are praying daily for the mission work in Boston. Others have served as summer missionaries in Boston.

Every Baptist in Mississippi can be involved with Hearts for Boston. Pick up your telephone, dial 1(800)748-1651 and ask for Partnership Missions.

PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS REPORT 2000

Maryland/Delaware

11	Maryland/Delaware Associations linked with
16	Mississippi Baptist Associations
43	Projects
709	Mission volunteers
93,000	Dollars invested in ministries
\$117,250	Travel costs

Honduras

21	Construction teams	9,006	Patients seen (dental)
18	Medical/Dental teams	94,232	Prescriptions filled
2	Evangelism teams	8,297	Bibles distributed
764	Mission volunteers	1,039,466	Dollars invested in
5,459	Professions of faith		Medical/Dental
23	Houses constructed		ministry
28,354	Patients seen (medical)	\$668,500	Travel costs

Ukraine

18	Projects
117	Mission volunteers
161	Professions of faith
7,000	Bibles distributed
15,970	Dollars invested in ministries
\$224,865	Travel costs

New homes open doors for family Bible studies

By Archie and Virginia Crawford
Fieldside Coordinators
La Ceiba, Honduras

The new owners (formerly homeless) of the houses constructed in El Porvenir, Honduras, building project have all moved in and Bible studies have been started with the families. The pastor at El Porvenir reports that several have already started attending the Baptist church.

The building project at Barranco Chele is enjoying their completed new church that was constructed by a generous giving team. They are getting ready for their first

baptismal service in the newly-constructed baptistry.

The building project at Paguales has started the foundation of their new church which will be completed by the team which donated the funds.

The Ilanga project just completed their new church and the congregation is getting ready for its first medical/dental/evangelism team.

Recently, we have started working with a gang ministry in La Ceiba. Please remember to pray for the leader, Lucy Delgado, and for everyone involved in this effort.



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NAMES IN THE NEWS



Thomas, Williams, and Simpson

O a k Grove Church, Smithdale, held deacon ordination service on Sept. 24 for John H. Freeman, son of Ruth and Walter Freeman of Johnson Chapel Community. Micah Rutland is pastor.



The Nichols and Simmons

Coleman Nichols was ordained to the ministry on Aug. 27 at Pineview Church, Hattiesburg. Nichols is minister of youth and recreation in Paris, Tenn. Pictured (from left) are Naomi Nichols, wife of Coleman Nichols; Nichols; and Steve Simmons, pastor.

Chad Williams was ordained a deacon in Glenfield Church, New Albany, on Aug. 27. Pictured (from left) are Horace Thomas, pastor; Williams; and Hollis Simpson, chairman of deacons.

Charlie McBride, pastor of Bowlin Church, Attala Association, was ordained to the ministry by McAdams Church, McAdams, on Aug. 27. Assisting in the service were Thomas Wicker, pastor of Sallis Church, and Walter Hines, pastor of Pilgrim's Rest Church. Pictured (from left) are Bobby Waggoner, director of missions, Attala Association; Jamie Moore, pastor; McBride; Hines; and Wicker.



Waggoner, Moore, McBride, Hines, and Wicker



Moore and Bishop

Caldwell Bishop was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for his 13 years as director of Sunday School of McAdams Church, McAdams. Pictured with Bishop (right) is Jamie Moore, pastor.



Liberty Church, Union Association, recently licensed Edward Murry to the ministry. He and his wife Christy have a daughter Brooklyn. The church had a fellowship meal following the service. Pictured (from left) are Murry and Shawn Davis, pastor.

STAFF CHANGES

Tommy "Bo" Cumberland accepted the position of interim minister of youth at Cato Church, Rankin Association

effective Sept. 27. He previously served as youth minister of Hillcrest Church, Jackson.



Olyn Roberts began his pastoral ministry at Yellow Creek Church, Winston Association, on Oct. 1, 1951. After almost 49 years of pastoring over the state, Alabama, and Alaska, Roberts is pastor again at Yellow Creek. This is the fourth time Roberts has

come out of retirement, but has remained active as supply preacher and banquet comedy speaker, which he will continue doing since services at Yellow Creek Church are first and third Sundays at 2 p.m. Roberts can be contacted at 3960 Highway 15 North, Louisville, MS 39339 or call (662) 773-5968.

Tylertown



Glenn

University of Montevallo and New Orleans Seminary. His pre-

Church,

has called **Michael W. Glenn** as pastor effective Aug. 13. A native of Alabama, Glenn received his education from The

vious places of service were Pelahatchie Church, Rankin Association, and Liberty Church, Mississippi Association.

Short Creek Church, Yazoo City, has called **Alan Balliet** as bivocational pastor effective Sept. 3. Balliet received his education at Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. He has served as pastor in various churches in Mississippi.

Sapa Church, Eupora; has called **Harvey Overstreet** as pastor effective Oct. 8. He has been serving as pastor of Ebenezer Church in Attala County.

Glendale Church, Leland, has called **Mark Pilgrim** as pastor. He previously served at County Line Church, Carthage.

Correction

The One Voice concert at First Church, Greenville, was reported in the Oct. 5 issue of HouseTops as being on Oct. 5. The correct date for the concert is Oct. 15 at 6:30 p.m.



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2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

William Carey College on the Coast will celebrate Alumni Day on Oct. 21 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on the Gulfport campus. Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the Parker Hall Auditorium followed by academic department open house at 9:30 a.m. Campus tours will begin at 10:30 a.m. and the Enid Hatton exhibit will open at 11 a.m. in the Sarah Gillespie Art Gallery. Hatton is an artist and medical illustrator. A catfish lunch is set for 11:30 a.m. followed by the presidential address by Larry Kennedy at 12:30 p.m. The Crusader Soccer team takes on Bethel College at 1 p.m. followed by the Lady Crusaders versus Bethel College at 3 p.m. For additional information call the alumni office at 1-800-962-5991, ext. 107.

Mississippi College (MC) will celebrate "Homecoming 2000" on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 13 and 14. The theme for this year is "Faithful to Our Legacy, Homecoming 2000."

The weekend will get underway on Friday with the D. M. Nelson-Aubrey McLemore Golf Tournament at The Refuge, Flowood. On Friday evening, the Annual "Follies" will be presented by the women's tribes and men's service clubs, in Swor Auditorium in Nelson Hall.

Saturday activities will begin with registration at 9 a.m. Homecoming football game against Mary Hardin Baylor University will begin 6

p.m. on Saturday. Other festivities occurring on Saturday afternoon are the annual parade and the National "M" Club meeting. "Spotlight on MC, Faithful to our Legacy" featuring the Chamber Choir, The Concert Singers, and the Naturals, will be held at 3 p.m. For more information, call (601) 925-3239.

Jacob Winscott, a senior Mississippi College (MC) student, took the lead as coordinator for Madison Central High School (MCHS) for the National Legislator's Back-to-School Day, sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures and MCHS Government Club, on Sept. 15. Winscott, a native of Prentiss, is practice teaching at MCHS in Madison in partial fulfillment of his teacher education degree requirements. He is the son of the late John G. Winscott, former pastor of Prentiss Church, and Janie H. Winscott.

The Winters School of Music at William Carey College (WCC) will present the duo, Lyricas, along with featured soloist Connie Roberts as part of its Fine Art Series, Oct. 9, at 7 p.m. in the Lucile Parker Gallery on the Hattiesburg

campus. Lyricas is comprised of pianist Angela Willoughby and clarinetist James Sclater.

Willoughby, a native of Rayville, La., is assistant professor of piano at Mississippi College. Her doctoral studies were completed at Louisiana State University. Sclater has been member of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra since 1971 and a faculty member in the Mississippi College Department of Music since 1970. A native of Mobile, Ala., he earned the degree in composition from the University of Texas at Austin. Roberts, a resident of Hattiesburg, serves as associate professor of music at WCC. She received her education at Louisiana State University and the University of Southern Mississippi.

For additional information concerning the concert, free admission, call the music department at 601-582-6175.

Mississippi College and the Milton Center will join forces to present the second Christian writer's conference, "Words Like Winged Seeds: A Writers' Workshop and Conference, A Milton Center Conference," Oct. 25-29.

The conference is part of the Milton Center's mission to build a community of writers, readers, editors, and publishers dedicated to excellence in Christian writing. Professional, published writers in the areas of poetry, fiction, memoir, and

songwriting will conduct small group workshops for beginning and practicing writers to help them find language and forms to express themselves and share their journey through the written word.

Workshops will be held each morning, Wednesday through Sunday of the conference. A workshop fee of \$70 covers the expenses for this part of the conference. Each afternoon and evening, the writers will give readings from their current works and talks about the writing process. These sessions are free. Writers will also be available to answer questions and sign copies of their works, which will be available at the book tables.

The highlight of this part of the conference will be the keynote address by nationally prominent poet and author, Li-Yung Lee. Lee's memoir, *The Winged Seed*, tells the story of his family's flight from Indonesia in 1959 after being persecuted by the Sukarno regime. Lee has also been featured by Bill Moyers in *The Language of Life*. Lee will be the keynote speaker on Thurs., Oct. 26h at 7 p.m., Swor Auditorium. On Friday evening, Kate Campbell, hailed as one of America's best songwriters, will be presented in a musical concert.

Admission to the Thursday and Friday evening highlights is free. For more information contact David Miller at (602) 925-3336.

REVIVAL DATES

Union, Raleigh: Oct. 13-15; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mike Pennock, Vicksburg, evangelist; Dennis Basden, Brandon, music; Robert H. Perry, interim pastor.

Fairfield, Moselle: Oct. 15-18; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Bowlin, Summit, evangelist; John Wolbrecht, Pearl, music; Kenny Goff, pastor.

Trinity, Philadelphia: Oct. 15-18; Sunday, 11 a.m. followed by a covered dish lunch; and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Wayne Hill, pastor, preaching; John McCombs, minister of music.

Center Terrace, Canton: Oct. 15-19; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Eddie Hamilton, evangelist; Gene Rester, music; Gene Fant Sr., pastor.

First, Byram: Oct. 22-25; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thurman and Kathy Braughton, missionaries for 30 years in Southeast Asia, now living in Hot Springs, Ark., evangelist; Carl Prewitt, pastor.

New Life, Leaf: Oct. 30-Nov. 3; services, 7 p.m.; Harold Danley, Elaine, Ark., evangelist; Brad Rawls, New Life Church, music; Jerry Rawls, pastor.

Williamsburg, Collins: Oct. 15-20; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Bill Nobles, evangelist; Ricky Holifield, music; Dennis Campbell, pastor.

Immanuel, Greenwood: Oct. 15-18; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Jackson, Harvesting Ministries, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, One Way Ministries, music.

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and a list of five references to Minister of Students Search Committee, Adaton Baptist Church, Highway 82 West, Starkville, MS 39759. Applications may be faxed to (662) 323-9688. For additional information, please phone (662) 323-3735.

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SUPPORT SCOUTS

Editor:

I am 70 years old, been a member of one Baptist church for 57 years, and an active deacon in that church for 52 years.

I agree with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) most of the time. What makes me proud of SBC is when any contradiction occurs, our leaders use the Bible for an answer and not popular opinion.

Now we have a big local mission to address — Boy Scouts with the homosexuals trying to destroy the scouts. I would like to see SBC and all Baptist churches step forward to rescue the scouts.

Put the scouts in our budget with a yearly gift of \$500,000 and more to come from local churches. Let's not let this mission pass us by.

Burdette Rutland
Wesson

PEN PALS NEEDED

Editor:

We will soon be receiving some 2,000 letters written by Chinese students in their English classes and addressed "To an American Friend."

Any youth worker or individual student who would like to participate should contact the National Fellowship of Baptist Educators (NFBE) with the following information: number of letters from junior high students

(grades seven through nine), senior high students (grades 10-12), and college students that the group will answer; name, address, and telephone number of person making the request; and name of the group or organization. Send this information to the NFBE, Samford University, Box 292305, Birmingham, AL 35229. E-mail: j-farther@juno.com or by phone/fax to (205) 822-4106. We must hear from you by Nov. 1 if you wish to participate.

John T. Carter
Birmingham, Ala.

EVOLUTIONISTS IN DENIAL

Editor:

Donald L. Williams' guest opinion continues the evolutionist denial of God's Word. He needs to read Genesis 1:27. God made man. God did not evolve man! That's the problem with evolution.

Ben B. Sayle
Greenville

MULTIPLY COST

Editor:

Thirty-five years ago I started teaching Bible in Pearl High School and continued for ten years. One of my Bible students presently teaches Bible in Pearl High School.

At that time we had Bible Clubs in high and junior high school. There were Bible Clubs in

many schools and there was a Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in many schools.

Today, there are over 29,000 Bible Clubs in public schools in our nation. There are over 10,000 public schools that have a FCA. Students have been meeting at the pole to pray for many years.

Recently three "conservative" leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) spent a vast sum of Cooperative Program (CP) dollars for a vast mailing to SBC churches for the purpose of informing us that those activities that have been carried out for many years are legal and constitutional.

Why were those great leaders so many decades in finding out these things? Could it be that they have only recently learned about the Equal Access Law that was passed by the U.S. Congress and approved by the U.S. Supreme Court in the middle '80s?

If you want to know how many CP dollars were used by our "conservative" brethren for that mass mailing to give us that "information," simply multiply the cost of mailing one card by the number of SBC churches.

C. L. Boland
Pearl

SBC LEANING LIBERAL

Editor:

I'm totally amazed and troubled today of the many people

and pastors as well who have been drawn to the New International Version (NIV) — "Non-Inspired Version."

I wonder how many have searched this version for the many changes in its wording.

It seems that our Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is leaning more and more daily to liberalism.

I mentioned some months ago this version along with the King James Version (KJV) and how the NIV would eventually take over.

This quarter's Sunday School material (from LifeWay Christian Resources) in the senior department has left the KJV completely out. I'm told this is the only material we can get. Strange, isn't it?

The sad part of this whole situation is those on this committee who knew better let those with extreme liberal leanings control the process. That resulted in a doctrinally deficient version of the Bible.

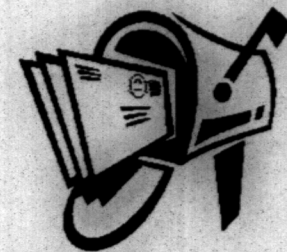
The Sodom story is focusing on (1) violent gang rape (2) in hospitality to the stranger.

I encourage anyone with the NIV to search it thoroughly.

This version is liberal from end to end.

I wonder why nothing is said of this by our pastors and leaders in SBC. If this information is available to me, it's also available to them.

Russell Bradford
Gulfport



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

HOMEcomings

Mt. Vernon, Newton: Oct. 15; worship, 10:45 a.m.; dinner in Family Life Building; afternoon singing; Billy Murphy, former pastor, speaker; Steve Pouncey, pastor.

Cold Springs, Collins: Oct. 15; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall following morning services; and 2 p.m. service; Brian Ivey, former pastor, speaker; Jerry Clark, music; Daniel Caldwell, interim pastor.

Highland, Jackson: Oct. 15; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch; Cliff Shipp, pastor.

Mt. Carmel, Edinburg: Oct. 15; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall at noon; Kim Wolverton, former pastor, guest speaker; Keith Fulton, pastor.

New Hope, Sumrall: Oct. 22; services, 11 a.m.; followed by fellowship meal; and 2 p.m.; Bruce Jolly, director of missions, Covington-Jefferson Davis Association, speaker for morning service; Charles Broom, speaker for afternoon service. Richard Hamilton, pastor.

Oak Grove, Carthage: 108th anniversary; Oct. 22; 10:30 a.m.; Glenn Smith, former pastor, speaker; music provided by Lamar and Amye Ethredge, Bernestine Ethredge, and Jane Bentley; Paul H. Leber, pastor.

Georgetown, Georgetown: Oct. 29; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; song service, 1:15 p.m.; Vann Windom, guest speaker; Todd Stewart, pastor.

Chunky, Chunky: 35th anniversary; Oct. 15; Sunday

School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; 1:45 p.m. service featuring The Ridgeways and The Rowzees; Johnny Collins, guest speaker.

Roxie, Roxie: Oct. 15; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch following; 1:30 p.m. service with In His Honor, a trio from Southwest Miss.; Darby Combs, guest speaker; Vann Windom, pastor.

Liberty, Newton: 100th anniversary; Oct. 22; 10 a.m.-noon with dinner following; J. B. Costilow, pastor.

First, Oloh, Sumrall: 98th anniversary; Oct. 15; Sunday School, 8:45 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall; Dean Stewart, Magee, guest speaker; Charlie Steelman, Mobile, Ala., music; Jipper Williford, pastor.

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Ambon survivor recalls Muslim violence

AMBON, Indonesia (BP) — A banner at the airstrip on Ambon, a tiny dot in Indonesia's Maluku island chain, quotes passages from both the Christian Bible and the Muslim Koran calling for peace

— but the violent assault on Frendy Nunemete's Christian village happened quickly on June 15.

The village was immediately overrun by attackers wielding automatic weapons, mortars, and grenades.

As his brother fell dead from a gunshot, Frendy climbed onto a roof to hide. The attackers searched for him below, then tossed grenades into the house and set it afire. To escape the flames, Frendy dove into a

large container of water, which soon became unbearably hot. As he climbed out and tried to lunge through the blaze, heat, and fire consumed his flesh.

Three months after the attack, Frendy spoke with Baptist representatives in his

hospital room — in a ward also housing victims of a Sept. 19 gun battle.

His burned scalp is wrapped in gauze. Pink, puffy, scarred flesh roughly resembles a face, most of which is burned away. Gauze covers the cavity, which once was a nose. His ears are charred, his eyes swollen and red — with no eyelids to protect them.

He can barely speak through a mangled mouth and swollen lips.

"I don't know why they did this," he rasped. "I don't understand why we are being killed. I'm just thankful to God that I am still alive."

Frendy's response echoes among many in the communities of Ambon, where the majority of the population historically has been Christian in an overwhelmingly Muslim nation. A battle has raged here for two years. Muslim and Christian communities that coexisted peacefully for generations now stand divided by sandbags and barbed wire barricades in the road — and blood on the ground.

Explanations are few, and blame is rampant.

Outwardly, the world hears of Christians being slaughtered by their Muslim neighbors. A religious "cleansing," some say.



CRY OF THE PEOPLE — Christian demonstrators protest outside the provincial governor's office in Ambon City, Indonesia. They want to know why the government offers them no protection from deadly attacks by well-equipped Muslim "jihad" warriors, backed by elements of the Indonesian military. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

In early 1999, a dispute between a Christian and a Muslim sparked riots on Ambon. Some allege the incident was a tripwire that perhaps was planned. Soon after, Christians charge, militant Muslim leaders in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, issued a call to arms for Muslims to "protect their brethren from Christian suppression."

Muslim jihad (holy war) forces poured into the Malukus by boat, ferry, and plane with shipments of arms and munitions to fuel their cause — and support from elements of the Indonesian military. Attacks on Christian communities commenced, sparking killings and retaliation by both sides.

Thousands have died and hundreds of churches and

mosques have been reported destroyed in the islands in the months since.

On Sept. 25, the Christian community of Ambon City marched in peaceful demonstration to the governor's office, demanding that the Indonesian government — and the world — acknowledge the slaughter of Christians, most recently on the nearby island of Saparua Sept. 23.

There, 170 homes were reported burned in an attack by Muslim jihad warriors, assisted by the military.

A reporter who witnessed the assault said it was well-planned. Navy gunboats lobbed shells onto the beach and sprayed cannon fire in the ocean, giving cover fire for craft carrying jihad fighters.



THANKFUL TO BE ALIVE — Stevie Pattiwian, 18, lost both legs to mortar shrapnel while defending a university campus against soldiers who used automatic weapons and armored vehicles during battles in Indonesia's Maluku Islands. "I've lost a lot of friends. I'm not sure how many," says the young Christian. "I'm thankful to be alive." (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Born to rule

Numbers 24:1-7, 9, 17-19

By Heather Cumberland

Balaam is an interesting Bible character. His story is often overlooked and yet it has so many important lessons.

In order to truly understand what is taking place in Numbers 24, one must begin at the beginning of Balaam's story in Chapter 22.

Balaam had been summoned by Balak, king of Moab. The Israelites were beginning to get too close to Moab so Balak set out to find someone who could curse the Israelites so they would not overpower Moab.

Balak's messengers visited Balaam and summoned him to Moab. Balaam consulted with God and God told him not to go with them (22:12).

When the messengers returned and told Balak that

Balaam would not come with them, he sent more messengers who were "more distinguished than the first" (22:15).

When the second group of messengers approached Balaam, he consulted with the Lord again. This time the Lord told him to go but to say only what the Lord gave him to say (22:20).

When Balaam arrived in Moab, Balak took him to Bammoth Baal so that he could see the Israelites. Balaam instructed Balak to stay back while he went to seek God's guidance. Balaam "met with God" (23:4) and came back with a blessing for Israel (23:7-10), not a curse as Balak had requested.

Balak would not settle for this, so he took Balaam back a second time and told him to

curse the Israelites. Again, Balaam met with God and came back with only blessings for Israel.

By this time, Balak was probably a little angry. He had given Balaam an all expense paid trip to Moab and he was not doing what Balak wanted him to do.

Balak began to think and told Balaam to "come to another place perhaps it would please God to let you curse them from there" (23:27). I think Balak was missing the point, but Balaam went away a third time and met with God. This third oracle is where our lesson starts for this week.

Speaking through Balaam, God poured out blessing after blessing on Israel. He spoke of it's beauty, abundance of water, and its greatness. This made Balak furious, but it did not stop Balaam. He continued to speak of a scepter (or ruler) who would rise up from Israel and crush Moab (24:17).

In life, I believe that we can

choose to be a Balaam or a Balak. A "Balak" is one who has his own agenda and tries to fit God into it. Balak did this in Numbers 23:27. If he was truly interested in what God wanted, he would have accepted Balaam's first oracle. Balak was determined to try over and over until the Lord (and Balaam) saw things his way.

How many times do Christians do this? We have our own agenda but we try to weave God's name into it. It is disturbing to see churches do this. Believe it or not, there are churches with pastors and church leaders who have their own agenda, but they try very hard to make the congregation believe it is all in God's will.

We do this in our personal life as well. We may find a high paying job that compromises our morals, but we lead ourselves to believe that this will ease our financial burden, so it must be in God's will.

A "Balaam" is the person who is not by any means perfect or holy, but willing and

able. Numbers 24:1 tells us that Balaam used sorcery quite a bit. By this we know that he had not always done everything according to God's will, but God still used him. He told Balak and his messengers at least five times that he would go with them, but he would not go against God (22:18, 38; 23:12, 26; 24:13).

Balaam was a brave soul. He not only blessed Israel, but he also prophesied about Moab's defeat by the Israelites (24:17). There he stood in front of the King of Moab (who was furious with him), and after three oracles that displeased Balak, Balaam continued to speak God's word even though he knew it could get him killed.

Balaam was not worried about what Balak thought or wanted him to do. His only concern was doing what God wanted him to do.

What a wonderful world it would be if all Christians would take this stand!

Cumberland is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Accepting new Christians

Acts 9:19-31

By Wayne VanHorn

"Growing in Understanding" is the title of Unit 3 of which today's lesson is the first installment. One way that Christians can grow in understanding is to be receptive toward new believers by showing concern for them and welcoming them.

Threats to a new Christian (vv. 19b-25). The "several days" Paul spent with the disciples of Damascus were no doubt filled with sharing testimonies about Jesus, praying, and worshipping.

Our first glimpse of Paul's preaching has him in the synagogues of Damascus proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God. Luke uses the phrase "Son of God" several places in his Gospel but it is usually spoken by angelic or demonic beings (Luke 1:32, 35; 4:3, 9, 41; 8:28; 22:70).

Only here in verse 20 does the phrase occur in Acts. The phrase has clear messianic import (Luke 22:67, 70) marking Jesus as the Messiah and testifying to his unique relationship with the Father, whom he had come to reveal. Paul emphasizes this relationship throughout his epistles (Rom. 1:1-10; 2 Cor. 1:19; Gal. 2:20; 4:4-7; Eph. 4:13).

Paul incurred the wrath of the Jewish community by preaching that Jesus was the Christ. They were astonished (NIV, 9:21), figuratively "knocked out of position," when they discovered that he who had come to Damascus to help them eradicate the Christian community had instead become one of its most ardent spokesmen.

Two aspects of Paul's delivery gave him a decisive edge

over the Jewish men who sought to oppose him. He had had a dramatic encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus and had been trained in the finest Jewish schools.

Paul knew both Christ and the theological arguments that his opponents would make. Luke indicates that Paul grew "more and more powerful" and he proved "that Jesus is the Christ."

Luke previously mentioned that Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 17). Paul, like Peter on Pentecost, became a powerful witness for Jesus as a result of the Spirit working within him (1 Thess. 1:5). The Jews could not allow such a harmful witness to their cause to live (v. 23).

Rejection of a new Christian (v. 26). Having been aided by his "disciples" Paul escaped from Damascus. He went to Jerusalem to "join" the disciples there. The term "join" derives from a Greek term meaning "to be glued together." The disciples were afraid and could not believe he was a true disciple.

Their response was understandable; after all, the last time Paul had been in Jerusalem, Stephen had been stoned to death and Paul had taken the lead in wreaking havoc on the church. New converts have a difficult time assimilating into a church when their salvation experience is not trusted and established believers reject them.

Endorsement of a new Christian (v. 27). We are reintroduced to Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement. In our first glimpse of Barnabas, he was making it possible for underprivileged members to assimilate into the church by selling his own property and providing for them (4:36). Now he takes the lead in getting Paul included and accepted.

Barnabas brought Paul to the apostles (v. 27). We know from Paul's personal account in Galatians 1:18-19 that he saw Peter and James the brother of Jesus, whom he regarded as an apostle.

As a result of Barnabas' actions, the apostles heard that the Lord had appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus, had spoken with him, and that Paul

had preached boldly in the name of Jesus while in Damascus. We too can help new believers feel welcome by standing up for them.

Assimilation of a new Christian (vv. 28-31). As a new believer Paul felt welcomed by the Jerusalem church. Paul stayed with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem.

As he spoke boldly in the name of Jesus and debated with the Grecian Jews, Paul made enemies who plotted to kill him. His Christian brothers intervened and sent him to his home city of Tarsus.

With Paul's departure, the first major period of persecution ended. The chief persecutor of the church had been converted and had become one of its most fervent spokesmen.

Luke tells us that the church enjoyed a time of peace marked by strengthening, encouragement by the Spirit, numerical growth, and reverence for God.

Like the early church, we can assimilate new believers by allowing them to share the ministry with us.

VanHorn is pastor of First Church, Columbia.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

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THE BAPTIST
Record

Japanese Baptists seek souls at Olympics

WINDSOR, Australia (BP) — Kickboxing champ "Bazooka" Kishi Nami, tennis great Michael Chang, Micki McKenzie, Arthur Hollands.

living than most countries — and one of the highest suicide rates as well.

Why? Because they need Jesus, say the volunteers from Tokyo Church. At the Olympics, with people from all over the world gathered to meet, celebrate, and talk, these Japanese Baptists are ready to share the Savior.

"This is a great way to evangelize with the different nationalities here [for the Olympics] and living in Australia," said volunteer Ferdinand Catibay, a Filipino member at the Tokyo church.

"When we first came, we were disillusioned because of the many restrictions on what you can do, but then we remembered [the apostle] Paul at Philippi and how they tried to keep him from preaching — but so many came to Christ. Likewise, if the Lord called us to be here, we have to do it. He will lead us and tell us where to go and how to approach people," he said.

Catibay has seen many people, Japanese and others, come to Christ in Sydney.

Kenji Miwa, a member of Gideons International in Tokyo, came to Sydney because of his burden for the lost after finding freedom in Christ years ago. During World War II, an American soldier gave Miwa a Japanese Bible, and he invited Jesus into his heart.

"God gives us good things," he said. "Even in the middle of something as terrible as war, he still finds a way."

The volunteers sang and preached at a Japanese-English church sponsored by Northside Church in North Sydney. The church is led by Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionary Tony Woods.



GRAND OPENING — Fireworks paint the sky in Sydney's Darling Harbor on the first night of competition during the Olympic Games. The celebration also marked the climax of months of preparation by hundreds of Australian and international Christian volunteers who came to the Games to spread the Gospel. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

OLYMPIC RINGS — The five rings of the Olympic symbol decorate the bridge that spans Sydney's Darling Harbor, as seen through Sydney's renowned opera house. Hundreds of Christian volunteers from around the world descended on Sydney during the Games to share the message of Christ with thousands of tourists, sports fans and average Australians. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Bibliocipher

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GHC AUBV, ODX BCODX
HYND CSM WVVC: WNA
U SOIV OYYVOAVX
HDCN CSVV WNA CSUB
YHAYNBV, CN QOPV
CSVV O QUDUBCVA ODX
O JUCDVBB GNCS NW
CSNBV CSUDLB JSUES
CSNH SOBC BVVD, ODX
NW CSNBV CSUDLB UD
CSV JSUES U JURR
OYYVOA HDCN CSVV.

OEBC CJVDCM-BUK:

BUKCVVD

Clue: Y = P

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Fourteen: Sixty-Four.

They are all athletes Japanese revere, and they are all aiming for a higher prize than gold medals — their Savior, Jesus Christ. So are 11 members of Tokyo Church, who spent the recent Olympics in Sydney, Australia, sharing the Gospel with visitors to the Olympics — primarily hard-to-reach Japanese.

The volunteers, at the Olympics with the outreach ministry "Quest Australia," handed out tracts and special Japanese-English New Testaments called "Towards the Goal." The New Testaments, formatted especially for the Olympics, include the Christian testimonies of the four world-class athletes Japanese recognize.

With Japan's evangelical population at less than 1%, there is much work to be done. Overwhelmingly Buddhist and Shinto, the Japanese boast a higher standard (and cost) of

Ky. church determined to post commandments

FRANKFORT, Ky. (BP) — There's a way to post the Ten Commandments even if local officials are intimidated by the threat of an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) lawsuit against their display in the schools or at the courthouse.

Crestwood Church, Frankfort, Ky., has posted the Ten Commandments in front of the church.

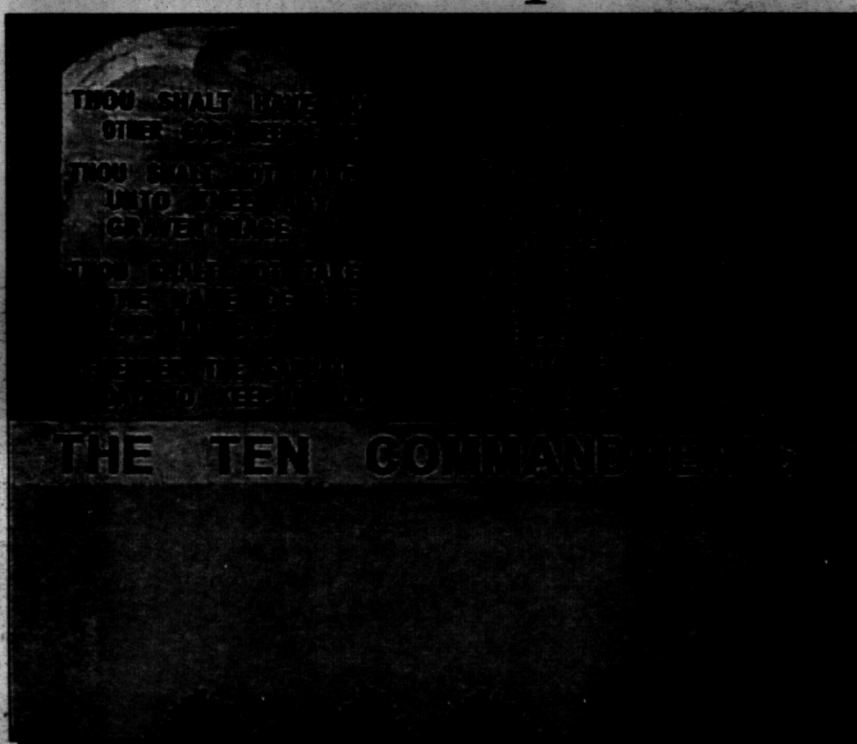
The church stands on the same street as the state capitol where a seven-foot-tall Ten Commandments monument was to have been placed by a vote of the state legislature until a lawsuit filed by the ACLU prompted a federal judge to intervene in July.

Crestwood's Ten Commandments monument:

- is 10-and-a-half feet tall and 12 feet long.

- consists of a four-foot-tall base, a one-foot-tall granite stone engraved with "Ten Commandments" on both sides and two five-and-a-half-foot-tall stones engraved with the commandments on both sides.

- is located in front of the church on a busy street, East Main, three miles east of the state capitol — and adjacent to the county board of education



offices and Elkhorn Elementary School and less than a fourth of a mile from Franklin County High School and Elkhorn Middle School.

"Especially if they're on a main thoroughfare, it's ideal," Crestwood member John Shoemaker said as a word of encouragement to other churches that might consider posting

the Ten Commandments on their property.

Thousands of adults and children will see Crestwood's Ten Commandments monument daily, he said, noting, "We think they're going to read and internalize it."

The \$13,000 cost of the monument was raised by the dozen members of Crestwood's

Foundation men's Sunday School class apart from the church budget.

The monument isn't Crestwood's first Ten Commandments initiative.

Shoemaker and other members of the Foundation class began giving personalized copies of the Ten Commandments to all the children in the church in 1995 — a project that expanded to offering free personalized copies of the Ten Commandments over the Internet at www.crestwoodbaptist.com/commandments.html.

"We've lost track" of how many copies of the Ten Commandments have been mailed out, Shoemaker said, recalling that copies have been sent to Switzerland and Uganda.

Visitors to the website also can download a copy of the Ten Commandments to print via their home computers.

Also on the website is a section on "How To Know God," tapping into spiritual helps available on the Internet from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

"We've got a passion for it," — a passion for the Ten Commandments to touch people's lives, Shoemaker said.